



Agenda Item Number: 2005-6-11A

BERNALILLO COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Meeting Date: June 14, 2005

Department: Zoning, Building, Planning
Environmental Health

Staff Contact: Sanford Fish, Director
Julie M. Baca, Deputy County Manager for
Community Services Division

TITLE: Preliminary Recommendations from South Valley Agricultural Task Force

ACTION: Review and discussion

SUMMARY:

On January 11, 2005, the Board passed a 180-day moratorium on zone change and special use permit applications in the South Valley and southwest mesa area. The moratorium was issued to address community concerns regarding agricultural preservation and land development issues in the area.

The following recommendations are the result of bi-monthly meetings with the South Valley Agricultural Task Force. The Agricultural Task Force, which is made up of residents, developers, business owners and others with an interest in the area, proposes modifications to the 2001 Southwest Area Plan, the County Zoning and Subdivision ordinances, and other County documents that impact land use in an effort to further the goals of maintaining local character and promoting agricultural land uses in the South Valley. The task force report includes the following main recommendations, based on discussions of three subcommittees:

The **Zoning Group** evaluated the current Bernalillo County zoning code with regard to agriculture and improved performance criteria. Key recommendations from this group include:

- Establishment of a special management area that protects lands designated as rural/agricultural,
- Separation of agricultural uses and activities from incompatible residential uses,
- Creation of an "Active Farm" definition that would allow certain permissive uses including, wine making, agricultural outbuildings and broader spectrum of livestock keeping.

The **Planning Group** evaluated current planning documents, including the Southwest Area Plan and the Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan. Key recommendations from this group include:

- Amending the Southwest Area Plan to include various land use maps including a Major Roadways map, summary land use map, and parks and open space map,
- Modification of the impact fees process to promote commercial/residential development which is consistent with the Southwest Area Plan,

- Amendment of the South West Area Plan to include performance guidelines with respect to open space, sustainable drainage and view sheds,
- Evaluation of the greenbelt tax exemption for agricultural land uses.

The **Agriculture/Water Group** evaluated the feasibility and viability of agriculture as well as appropriate development scenarios for future development in the South Valley. Their recommendations include:

- Thorough investigation of the feasibility of a Transfer of Development Rights program,
- Implementation of cluster development principals into the Southwest Area Plan, Amending the Subdivision Ordinance to promote cluster development,
- Amending the Zoning Ordinance to allow the protection of acequias,
- Modification of County policy to encourage contract farming on open space properties by extending longer leases to farmers,
- County support for the creation of an agricultural land trust to provide assistance for conservation easement,
- Formation of water task force and an agricultural task force to pursue follow up details for the recommended programs.

ATTACHMENT:

1. Summary of Recommendations

FISCAL IMPACT

The overall fiscal impact is dependent on the implementation of specific items from the recommendations. At this time the item is before the Board for review and discussion. Details of fiscal impact would be provided at the time the individual items are brought forward for approval.

STAFF ANALYSIS SUMMARY

COUNTY MANAGER

Staff worked closely with the community to develop this document and recommendations. Additional work is needed in order to prioritize these recommendations and develop amendments to County codes. Staff should be commended for their efforts. TL 6/9/05

DEPUTY COUNTY MANAGER FOR COMMUNITY SERVICES

The efforts of the task force are to promote agricultural land uses of the South Valley and to maintain the local character of the area. The task force has met on a bi-monthly basis since January 2005 to come up with preliminary recommendations that impact land use in the South Valley. I recommend Board approval. Julie Baca 6/1/05

LEGAL

This report is a good first step in the process of amending county plans and ordinances to better protect agricultural uses in the South Valley. PFT 5/05/05

FINANCE

Budget Currently, there is no fiscal impact. If at such time a determination is made that increased funding will be required, a financial resolution will be presented to the Board of County Commissioners. Geri Maestas, Budget Analyst Sr. 5/4/05